



INTO THE MURMURATION  
(Book I of the Dwellin Series)

by  
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## Prologue - Music Gets Its Wings

Alice fell down a rabbit hole  
and Harry found a stone  
Lucy entered Narnia,  
and Marcy met a mole.  
But no one seemed to notice  
that nature was the key -  
the door to every wonderland  
that set the stories free.

This story begins with a song.

A strange and wonderful song that was almost lost at the edge of a dream when Gertie's cat, Bosco, decided it was time for breakfast and began gently patting her cheek with his paw.

Pat, pat, pat went Bosco's soft brown paw on Gertie's cheek. But Gertie was enjoying her dream too much to wake up.

In the dream, Gertie and her friend Anna were sitting on a park bench in Odessa's Victory Park chatting. All around and above them colorful autumn leaves were falling from the trees and carpeting the park's pathways with orange, yellow and red. Up ahead, Gertie's granddaughter, Haley was sitting beside the pond visiting with a family of mandarin ducks.

Suddenly, Haley jumped to her feet, pointed at the sky, and called, "Look, Grandma!

Looking up, Gertie saw thousands of small black birds with iridescent wings forming a giant cloud in the sky. The cloud dipped, dove, twisted, and turned - expanding and contracting into a giant, swirling cloud. "Those are starlings," said Anna. "When they gather to fly, it's called a murmuration."

Set against the cool autumn sky, the cloud of starlings dipped and turned, rose and fell, rippling across the sky like a sheet blowing in the wind. "What's that noise they're making?" Gertie asked. "It sounds like singing."

The sound, which was so low and deep at first that Gertie thought it might be the wind rose gradually grew louder and louder, rising and falling like the birds into sad, sweet harmonies.

<https://vimeo.com/785272463>

“It’s the birds, Grandma,” Haley said. “They’re singing for Ukraine.”

That’s when Bosco’s soft, furry paw patted Gertie’s face again, pulling her away from the dream.

Pat, pat, pat went Bosco’s paw. “Just a minute Bosco,” Gertie mumbled, pushing the cat away and trying to stay inside the dream.

But it was no use. Thinking she was playing a game, Bosco jumped onto Gertie’s chest, swished his tail under her nose, and patted her chin. Pat, pat, pat went Bosco’s paw. “Meow!” he added, just to be sure she was awake.

“Oh, all right!” Gertie said, opening her eyes and seeing Bosco’s dark brown face inches from her nose. “Get off my chest you big goof. You weigh a ton.”

Bosco hopped to the floor, twitched his tail, and headed for the door, looking back as if to say, “Are you coming?”